

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-9 (canceled).

10 (currently amended): A method of, in a simulation of a group including N members where N is an integer equal to or greater than 2, controlling the movement of the members of the group so that the members are moved from locations in a predetermined initial layout in a state space to locations in a target layout, said method comprising the steps of:

a) assigning locations in said target layout to the respective members lying at locations in said initial layout so that the members are moved along the shortest distances to the locations in the target layout;

b) moving the members at the locations in said initial layout in accordance with the assignments made in step a);

c) calculating the value of a predetermined evaluation function associated with the movements, accomplished in said step b), of the respective members to the assigned locations in the target layout;

d) selecting K members, where K is an integer ~~equal to or~~ smaller than N, having the greatest values of the evaluation function; and

e) replacing the assignments of the locations in the target layout within K! combinations of only the selected K members,

wherein after completion of step e), the method returns to step b) so as to perform steps b) to e) repeatedly.

11 (canceled).

12 (currently amended): A recording medium readable by an information processor, recording a program for enabling an information processor, in a simulation of a group including N members where N is an integer equal to or greater than 2, to control the movement of the members of the group so that the members are moved from locations in a predetermined initial layout in a state space to locations in a target layout, wherein said program enables the information processor to execute the steps of:

a) assigning locations in said target layout to the respective members lying at locations in said initial layout so that the members are moved along the shortest distances to the locations in the target layout;

b) moving the members at the locations in said initial layout in accordance with the assignments made in step a);

c) calculating the value of a predetermined evaluation function associated with the movements, accomplished in said step b), of the respective members to the assigned locations in the target layout;

d) selecting K members, where K is an integer ~~equal to or~~ smaller than N, having the greatest values of the evaluation function; and

e) replacing the assignments of the locations in the target layout within K! combinations of only the selected K members,

wherein after completion of step e), the method returns to step b) so as to perform steps b) to e) repeatedly.

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